❖ RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES ❖

With approximately 100,000 annual visitors to Dominguez-Escalante NCA (D-E NCA), recreation is one of the most highly and widely valued uses of the NCA.

What does the BLM's Recreation and Visitor Services Program do?

The BLM's D-E NCA Recreation and Visitor Services Program manages public lands to protect or enhance recreational opportunities (e.g., hiking and ATV riding), recreational experiences (e.g., solitude, silence, spending time with friends and family, getting exercise, or seeing wildlife in their natural habitat), and recreational settings. The recreational setting is the environment where recreational activities occur and includes the level of landscape development (the physical environment), the number of people in an area and the evidence of their use (the social environment), and the influence of management activities (the operational environment).

What are SRMAs and ERMAs?

The BLM manages recreation by designating certain areas as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) or Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMA). Both types of areas are included in the draft Resource Management Plan's (RMP) range of alternatives (see table below).

ERMAs are areas where the BLM and its partners protect recreational activities and associated recreational settings but not the quantity or quality of opportunities (e.g., the number of trails or how desirable they are). To determine success, the BLM only monitors whether the opportunity to participate is available.

SRMAs are areas that the BLM and its partners actively manage in order to support both the opportunity to participate in activities and the opportunity to have specific types of experiences. In SRMAs, the BLM's goal is to provide high quality recreational opportunities. To determine success, the BLM monitors whether its management actions (e.g., building new trails) are meeting its objectives (e.g., access to scenic overlooks) for the activities, experiences, and settings in the SRMA.

What happens if lands are not identified as SRMAs or ERMAs?

In areas not designated as SRMAs or ERMAs, the BLM does not protect either recreational opportunities or recreational settings. Recreation would continue in these areas, but the BLM could restrict it as necessary to achieve other resource objectives.

What are some of the important decisions to be made about recreation and visitor services, and where in the draft RMP do I find this information?

1. *Recreation area designations:* Proposed recreation area designations (e.g., SRMA or ERMA) are described in Chapter 2 ("Alternatives"), beginning on page 32 of the draft RMP. Maps 2-8a, 2-8b, 2-8c, 2-8d, and 2-8e show these designations under each of the BLM's five alternatives (see also table below).
2. *Recreational objectives:* Chapter 2, section 2.6 ("Alternatives Matrix"), beginning on page 115, describes alternative objectives for each recreation area being proposed. These objectives will likely remain unchanged and guide the BLM's management of that area for as long as the RMP is in effect.
3. *Restrictions on recreational uses:* Under each objective in the draft RMP, the BLM identified specific restrictions on uses that would support its recreation area designations and objectives. For example, under some alternatives, the BLM set objectives for managing the Gunnison River specifically for nonmotorized boating and solitude. Under these alternatives, the BLM may propose to restrict motorized boating in order to achieve those objectives.
4. *Settings to support recreation area designations:* In Appendix L of the draft RMP, the BLM identified desired recreational settings for the proposed SRMAs.

	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E (Preferred)
Acres of SRMA	0	0	38,719 (2 SRMAs)	90,662 (9 SRMAs)	46,995 (4 SRMAs)
Acres of ERMA	0	109,979 (6 ERMAs)	0	37,522 (1 ERMA	94,488 (3 ERMAs)
Acres not managed as recreation areas	210,012	110,012	171,272	81,807	68,508

Questions to consider when commenting on the decisions in the draft RMP regarding recreation and visitor services:

- Did the BLM consider the full range of management options for recreation and visitor services? If not, what other options should be considered?
- What do (or don't) you like about the preferred alternative?
- In the D-E NCA, what recreational opportunities and settings should be protected?
- Would the restrictions and management actions outlined in Chapter 2 ("Alternatives") help the BLM achieve the desired conditions for recreation?
  Did the BLM adequately consider the consequences of all the different management alternatives in Chapter 4 ("Environmental Consequences")? If not, what else should be considered?